

Appl. No. 10/613,296  
Docket No. 9322  
Amdt. dated February 27, 2008  
Reply to Office Action mailed on September 27, 2007  
Customer No. 27752

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article having a longitudinal axis and a periphery, the absorbent article comprising,
  - a. a fluid permeable facing layer, at least portions of which having facing layer zones of enhanced extensibility;
  - b. a first absorbent layer joined to the facing layer, the first absorbent layer comprising at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility, the at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility being a region of the first absorbent layer of relatively higher extensibility than regions of the first absorbent layer adjacent to the at least one first absorbent zone of extensibility, the at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility being in registry with the facing layer zones of enhanced extensibility, wherein the joining of the facing layer and the first absorbent layer is substantially limited to the portions of the facing layer intermediate the at least one first absorbent layer zone of enhanced extensibility;
  - c. a liquid impermeable backsheet joined to the facing layer at the periphery, the liquid impermeable backsheet having a garment facing surface;
  - d. fastening means disposed on at least a portion of the garment facing surface of the liquid impermeable backsheet, the fastening means defining attachment zones; and
  - e. wherein the at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility is decoupled from the attachment zones of the fluid impermeable backsheet.
2. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility comprises openings defining slits.
3. (Withdrawn) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the zones of extensibility comprise incrementally-stretched rib-like elements.

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4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 1, further comprising a second absorbent layer, the second absorbent layer disposed between the first absorbent layer and the backsheet and joined to the backsheet, wherein the at least a portion of the first absorbent layer is decoupled from both the second absorbent layer and the attachment zones of the fluid impermeable backsheet.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility defines a generally linear pattern of openings defining slits, the generally linear pattern being oriented obliquely to the longitudinal axis.

11. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the at least one first absorbent layer zone of extensibility defines a V-shaped pattern symmetric about the longitudinal axis.

12. (Original) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the facing layer comprises a topsheet and a secondary topsheet.

13. (Original) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the facing layer comprises an apertured, formed film.

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14. (Original) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the facing layer comprises a nonwoven web.

15. (Original) The absorbent article of Claim 1, wherein the absorbent article is a catamenial device.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)